

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5556

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Transportation, February 17, 2009

Title: An act relating to prohibiting the reduction of toll penalties for infractions detected through the use of a photo enforcement system.

Brief Description: Prohibiting the reduction of toll penalties for infractions detected through the use of a photo enforcement system.

Sponsors: Senators Kilmer, Carrell and Kauffman.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/12/09, 2/17/09 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5556 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chair; Swecker, Ranking Minority Member; Becker, Berkey, Delvin, Eide, Jarrett, Kastama, Kauffman, Kilmer, King, Ranker and Sheldon.

Staff: Amanda Cecil (786-7429)

Background: Drivers that do not pay a toll when they cross the new Tacoma Narrows Bridge are subject to an infraction. The infraction is \$40 plus an additional toll penalty of three time the cash toll for a standard passenger car during peak hours, currently \$4. The court remits the toll penalty to the Washington State Department of Transportation and it is deposited into the Tacoma Narrows Bridge Toll Account.

Any reduction in the total penalty imposed is made proportionally between the \$40 infraction penalty and the toll penalty.

Summary of Bill (Recommended Substitute): Any reduction in the infraction must be made to the infraction penalty. The toll penalty may not be reduced. If the driver is found to have not committed an infraction, the driver must pay the toll due at the time the photograph was taken.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (Recommended Substitute): This bill was amended in committee to include language that requires drivers that were found to not have committed an infraction to pay the toll due at the time the photograph was taken.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill: PRO: Currently, when a violator contests a ticket, the toll infraction portion can be reduced below the base toll rate, leading to the Tacoma Narrows Toll Bridge Account getting less than a standard toll. By making the toll revenue a static amount, this becomes a more predictable stream of revenue. This makes toll setting easier for the Transportation Commission.

OTHER: This would require a system upgrade for the courts to perform or they would have to handle these tickets manually. Currently, the Tacoma Narrows Toll Bridge Account receives an average of \$6 per violator, which is \$2 more than the cash toll.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Robert Ryan, Citizen Advisory Committee; Randy Boss, citizen; Dan O'Neal, Transportation Commission Chair.

OTHER: Mellani McAleenan, Board for Judicial Administration.